

**U.S. Department of Education**  
**2017 National Blue Ribbon Schools Program**

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[X] Public or [ ] Non-public

For Public Schools only: (Check all that apply) [ ] Title I [ ] Charter [X] Magnet [X] Choice

Name of Principal Mrs. Dawana Gary

(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., etc.) (As it should appear in the official records)

Official School Name Dr. N.H. Jones Elementary School

(As it should appear in the official records)

School Mailing Address 1900 S.W. 5th Street

(If address is P.O. Box, also include street address.)

City Ocala State FL Zip Code+4 (9 digits total) 34471-1861

County Marion

Telephone (352) 671-7260 Fax \_\_\_\_\_

Web site/URL http://www.marionschools.net/nhj E-mail Dawana.Gary@marion.k12.fl.us

I have reviewed the information in this application, including the eligibility requirements on page 2 (Part I-Eligibility Certification), and certify, to the best of my knowledge, that it is accurate.

Date \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
(Principal's Signature)

Name of Superintendent\*Dr. Heidi Maier E-mail heidi.maier@marion.k12.fl.us  
(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., Other)

District Name Marion School District Tel. (352) 671-7700

I have reviewed the information in this application, including the eligibility requirements on page 2 (Part I-Eligibility Certification), and certify, to the best of my knowledge, that it is accurate.

Date \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
(Superintendent's Signature)

Name of School Board  
President/Chairperson Mrs. Kelly King  
(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., Other)

I have reviewed the information in this application, including the eligibility requirements on page 2 (Part I-Eligibility Certification), and certify, to the best of my knowledge, that it is accurate.

Date \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
(School Board President's/Chairperson's Signature)

The original signed cover sheet only should be converted to a PDF file and uploaded via the online portal.

*\*Non-public Schools: If the information requested is not applicable, write N/A in the space.*

## **Part I – Eligibility Certification**

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The signatures on the first page of this application (cover page) certify that each of the statements below, concerning the school’s eligibility and compliance with U.S. Department of Education and National Blue Ribbon Schools requirements, are true and correct.

1. The school configuration includes one or more of grades K-12. (Schools on the same campus with one principal, even a K-12 school, must apply as an entire school.)
2. All nominated public schools must meet the state’s performance targets in reading (or English language arts) and mathematics and other academic indicators (i.e., attendance rate and graduation rate), for the all students group and all subgroups, including having participation rates of at least 95 percent using the most recent accountability results available for nomination.
3. To meet final eligibility, all nominated public schools must be certified by states prior to September 2017 in order to meet all eligibility requirements. Any status appeals must be resolved at least two weeks before the awards ceremony for the school to receive the award.
4. If the school includes grades 7 or higher, the school must have foreign language as a part of its curriculum.
5. The school has been in existence for five full years, that is, from at least September 2011 and each tested grade must have been part of the school for the past three years.
6. The nominated school has not received the National Blue Ribbon Schools award in the past five years: 2012, 2013, 2014, 2015, or 2016.
7. The nominated school has no history of testing irregularities, nor have charges of irregularities been brought against the school at the time of nomination. The U.S. Department of Education reserves the right to disqualify a school’s application and/or rescind a school’s award if irregularities are later discovered and proven by the state.
8. The nominated school has not been identified by the state as “persistently dangerous” within the last two years.
9. The nominated school or district is not refusing Office of Civil Rights (OCR) access to information necessary to investigate a civil rights complaint or to conduct a district-wide compliance review.
10. The OCR has not issued a violation letter of findings to the school district concluding that the nominated school or the district as a whole has violated one or more of the civil rights statutes. A violation letter of findings will not be considered outstanding if OCR has accepted a corrective action plan from the district to remedy the violation.
11. The U.S. Department of Justice does not have a pending suit alleging that the nominated school or the school district as a whole has violated one or more of the civil rights statutes or the Constitution’s equal protection clause.
12. There are no findings of violations of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act in a U.S. Department of Education monitoring report that apply to the school or school district in question; or if there are such findings, the state or district has corrected, or agreed to correct, the findings.

## PART II - DEMOGRAPHIC DATA

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Data should be provided for the most recent school year (2016-2017) unless otherwise stated.

### DISTRICT

1. Number of schools in the district (per district designation):
- 33 Elementary schools (includes K-8)
  - 9 Middle/Junior high schools
  - 8 High schools
  - 5 K-12 schools

55 TOTAL

### SCHOOL (To be completed by all schools)

2. Category that best describes the area where the school is located:
- Urban or large central city
  - Suburban with characteristics typical of an urban area
  - Suburban
  - Small city or town in a rural area
  - Rural
3. Number of students as of October 1, 2016 enrolled at each grade level or its equivalent in applying school:

Grade	# of Males	# of Females	Grade Total
PreK	0	0	0
K	54	54	108
1	55	52	107
2	58	50	108
3	55	53	108
4	59	51	110
5	58	49	107
6	0	0	0
7	0	0	0
8	0	0	0
9	0	0	0
10	0	0	0
11	0	0	0
12 or higher	0	0	0
<b>Total Students</b>	339	309	648

4. Racial/ethnic composition of the school:
- 1 % American Indian or Alaska Native
  - 10 % Asian
  - 17 % Black or African American
  - 6 % Hispanic or Latino
  - 1 % Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
  - 61 % White
  - 4 % Two or more races
  - 100 % Total**

(Only these seven standard categories should be used to report the racial/ethnic composition of your school. The Final Guidance on Maintaining, Collecting, and Reporting Racial and Ethnic Data to the U.S. Department of Education published in the October 19, 2007 *Federal Register* provides definitions for each of the seven categories.)

5. Student turnover, or mobility rate, during the 2015 – 2016 school year: 2%

This rate should be calculated using the grid below. The answer to (6) is the mobility rate.

Steps For Determining Mobility Rate	Answer
(1) Number of students who transferred <i>to</i> the school after October 1, 2015 until the end of the 2015-2016 school year	8
(2) Number of students who transferred <i>from</i> the school after October 1, 2015 until the end of the 2015-2016 school year	8
(3) Total of all transferred students [sum of rows (1) and (2)]	16
(4) Total number of students in the school as of October 1, 2015	645
(5) Total transferred students in row (3) divided by total students in row (4)	0.025
(6) Amount in row (5) multiplied by 100	2

6. English Language Learners (ELL) in the school: 0%  
1 Total number ELL

Specify each non-English language represented in the school (separate languages by commas):  
Spanish and Guardi

7. Students eligible for free/reduced-priced meals: 22%  
Total number students who qualify: 114

8. Students receiving special education services: 30%  
195 Total number of students served

Indicate below the number of students with disabilities according to conditions designated in the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act. Do not add additional conditions. It is possible that students may be classified in more than one condition.

- 0 Autism
- 0 Deafness
- 0 Deaf-Blindness
- 0 Emotional Disturbance
- 0 Hearing Impairment
- 0 Mental Retardation
- 0 Multiple Disabilities
- 0 Orthopedic Impairment
- 0 Other Health Impaired
- 1 Specific Learning Disability
- 51 Speech or Language Impairment
- 0 Traumatic Brain Injury
- 0 Visual Impairment Including Blindness
- 0 Developmentally Delayed

9. Number of years the principal has been in her/his position at this school: 1
10. Use Full-Time Equivalents (FTEs), rounded to nearest whole numeral, to indicate the number of school staff in each of the categories below:

	<b>Number of Staff</b>
Administrators	2
Classroom teachers including those teaching high school specialty subjects	35
Resource teachers/specialists/coaches e.g., reading, math, science, special education, enrichment, technology, art, music, physical education, etc.	8
Paraprofessionals under the supervision of a licensed professional supporting single, group, or classroom students.	2
Student support personnel e.g., guidance counselors, behavior interventionists, mental/physical health service providers, psychologists, family engagement liaisons, career/college attainment coaches, etc.	2

11. Average student-classroom teacher ratio, that is, the number of students in the school divided by the FTE of classroom teachers, e.g., 22:1 19:1
12. Show daily student attendance rates. Only high schools need to supply yearly graduation rates.

<b>Required Information</b>	2015-2016	2014-2015	2013-2014	2012-2013	2011-2012
Daily student attendance	98%	97%	97%	97%	97%
High school graduation rate	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%

13. **For high schools only, that is, schools ending in grade 12 or higher.**  
Show percentages to indicate the post-secondary status of students who graduated in Spring 2016.

<b>Post-Secondary Status</b>	
Graduating class size	0
Enrolled in a 4-year college or university	0%
Enrolled in a community college	0%
Enrolled in career/technical training program	0%
Found employment	0%
Joined the military or other public service	0%
Other	0%

14. Indicate whether your school has previously received a National Blue Ribbon Schools award.  
Yes X No

If yes, select the year in which your school received the award. 2011

15. In a couple of sentences, provide the school's mission or vision statement.

Our mission at Dr. N.H. Jones is to create an innovative learning environment where all students are enriched through Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts, and Mathematics.

16. **For public schools only**, if the school is a magnet, charter, or choice school, explain how students are chosen to attend.

We use a random lottery system to select students for the magnet program.

## **PART III – SUMMARY**

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The doors of Dr. N. H. Jones Elementary first opened as a neighborhood school in 1960 with an estimated 425 students under the former name, NH Upper Elementary. In both the original and renaming of the school, Dr. Nathaniel Hawthorne Jones is honored as a beloved community member and the first African American doctor to officially become a staff physician at Munroe Memorial Hospital in Ocala, Florida. For Dr. N. H. Jones Elementary, 2017 marks the 57th year of working to meet the ever evolving educational needs of students in our community.

Much like today, during the foundational years of Dr. N. H. Jones, community partnerships were established. Dr. N. H. Jones partnered with College Park Elementary School by sharing the responsibility of servicing kindergarten through fifth grade. College Park housed kindergarten through second while Dr. NH Jones housed grades third through fifth. In 1994, Marion County School Board turned Dr. N. H. Jones into a magnet school focusing on Science, Math, and Technology. Since the opening of the magnet program there have been five principals who have served the students, teachers, parents, and community. Dr. N. H Jones now serves approximately 648 students enrolled in kindergarten through fifth grade.

Dr. N. H. Jones has maintained a grade of "A" for over a decade and has received the honor of being named as a National Blue Ribbon School in 2005 and 2011. This prestigious recognition has provided our school with a platform for developing and maintaining high expectations of students, parents, and teachers. All stakeholders have a sense of pride in the school, which in turn leads to a vested interested in its success. Students want to come to school and take ownership of their own learning by self-checking, self-reflecting, and self-correcting.

Parent involvement is an essential element of our program. As a school of choice, it is required that parents support the vision, goals, objectives, rules, policies, expectations, and image of our school. Parents support the school-wide expectations, monitor their child's progress, and respond to requests for parent conferences. Parents are also encouraged to volunteer at school and school-related activities. Dedicated teachers plus enthusiastic parents have been the formula for student success at Dr. N.H. Jones. We have an exceptionally high parent volunteer rate. All four of our current community and business partners are also parents at our school who contribute to our STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts, Mathematics) program. Our families continue to share the commitment of motivating our students and providing high expectations for them which has played a unique role in our performance data.

Our mission at Dr. N.H. Jones Elementary is to create an innovative environment where all students are enriched through our STEAM program. Enabling our students to learn and utilize the Scientific Method, we offer a strong integrated science program. Students participate in hands-on activities in the classroom as well as in their weekly special's rotation in the interactive Science Lab with the guidance of our Science Enrichment Teacher.

In our Makerspace, as well as our classrooms, students engage in solving real world problems through design challenges. These higher level challenges involve critical thinking, shared inquiry, and collaborative learning. Coding, web design, and media production are applications found in our computer lab special's rotation, as well as some classrooms. In addition, our students have the opportunity to participate in WeatherSTEM and the following extracurricular activities: Math, Computer, Art, Music, Lego Robotics, Mars Medical Challenge, and Health Clubs.

At Dr. N.H. Jones we currently have several Lego Robotics and Junior Robotics teams for grades 2-5 which are sponsored by both parents and community partners such as Lockheed Martin. During this time students utilize computers to complete activities and missions, write reports, conduct research, and share creative ideas. Students work cooperatively in groups, learn effective problem solving strategies and work habits, learn core values, and build prototypes that help solve real world problems.

Students at all grade level have the opportunity to participate in media production and the Jim Harbin Media Festival awards. During this activity students use their creativity and skill to develop a movie that falls into

one of the following categories: Documentary, Comedy, Animation, Advertisement, Book Trailer, Drama, Instructional Video, News, and Public Service Announcement.

Since becoming a recognized Blue Ribbon school in 2011, our school has been named the #1 school in Florida by MSN.com and ranks 4th on Schooldigger.com. As a magnet school, the Blue Ribbon recognition provides our school with the leverage that we need to compete against other magnet schools for applicants in the district.

In regards to curriculum and instruction, since we have received this award, our teachers have been provided with ongoing KAGAN training to enhance engagement during instruction. Understanding students learn best through cooperative learning, our teachers have participated in teambuilding activities to empower their own collaboration techniques as they model for students. This practice has changed our climate and culture from a competitive atmosphere to a cooperative one.

Fortunately, our Blue Ribbon status has also attracted many Highly Qualified teachers with varying strengths and abilities to our school. As a result, we provide teachers with differentiated Professional Development. Teachers receive small group and/or one on one sessions with the Professional Development Specialist. Teachers also have the opportunity to choose what trainings would benefit them and their students' needs based on their own data.

To continue involving family and our community, Dr. N.H. Jones Chapter of the National Elementary Honor Society has been created since being awarded. Currently our students inducted into the program exhibit excellence in academics and leadership, as well as community service. National Elementary Honor Society students assess the needs of community problems and then develop a plan of action to address it. Thus far, students have participated in raising money for the March of Dimes, Animal Rescue Donation Project, Can Food Drive for families in need, and a stuffed animal drive for Children's Hospitals.

Creating a learning environment that is not only fun for all students, but challenges students to have a "Growth Mindset" has a direct impact on our students' achievement rate and attendance. Good attendance is critical to student success in our magnet program. Much of the learning takes place through classroom discussions, presentations, and small group or one-on-one teacher time. Our students attend school regularly (97% daily attendance rate school-wide), on time, and prepared for learning.

## **PART IV – CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION**

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### **1. Core Curriculum:**

Dr. N.H. Jones strives to teach the Florida Standards and create lifelong learners. Students and staff members practice using Kagan Cooperative Learning strategies. Students learn how to respectfully communicate with their peers, teachers, and school volunteers.

In order to teach and enrich the Florida Standards in the core subject areas of Mathematics and Science teachers provide students with real world problem solving opportunities, story based math problems, project based learning, and utilize Math and Science manipulatives. Teachers in primary grades spend more time using manipulatives to allow students the kinesthetic and visual learning opportunities. When students are able to touch the problem, manipulate it, and internalize it they are more likely to know, understand, and implement these practices. Once students master standards by using manipulatives they are able to apply real-world problem solving. Students begin learning the basic Math concepts and move into more complex problem solving. Students work on science projects as a class in the primary grades, then move to group science projects, and by fifth grade students are able to complete a standards-based individual science project.

All students participate in Science lab with the Science Resource teacher once a week. Students in kindergarten and first grade visit the lab for 30 minutes, while second through fifth grade attend lab for 50 minutes. The Science lab teacher collaborates with other teachers to support standards covered in the classroom and offer a more hands on approach to Science.

In the area of English Language Arts (ELA), students are exposed to a variety of texts via district adopted curriculum, school based programs, and the use of current media. Students learn the ELA standards through discussion, small and whole group instruction, and individual practice. Teachers work to incorporate meaningful and purposeful lessons, higher order questioning, and encourage students to internalize their learning. Teachers provide individual and small group instruction based on students' academic needs. Teachers tie in texts that relate to other subject areas and encourage reading at home and in the classroom. Students use Achieve 3000 which has current non-fiction texts that are differentiated to each student's reading level. The program was chosen because of the ability to individualize a student's learning, provide students with opportunities to manipulate and read texts on the computer, and enrich learners through stretch articles. In the primary grades, students focus on building a strong phonics foundation, learning sounds, blends, and word parts.

With the unique culture of Dr. N.H. Jones our students are able to see firsthand what citizenship looks like and the importance of giving back. In the primary grades students spend the first few weeks, each school year, learning about how to be a good friend and a good citizen, and what community really means. The students see volunteers everywhere—in the classrooms assisting students with learning, in the media center making sure our students have books to check out, and more.

The Social Studies standards are integrated throughout the curriculum. Students learn about different events in history and cultures around the world. In kindergarten they compare the past to today. As students get older they learn about the impact history has on our lives and the future. Students in second grade show mastery of the economics standards by creating different goods and services that people would benefit from today. Second grade students also have the opportunity to participate in a mock trial at the courthouse utilizing legal concepts. In fourth grade students read, research, and work with their peers to learn about Florida's history. The students end this unit by traveling to Saint Augustine. Students participate in school-based voting, learn about government, and take field trips aligned to Florida standards. Students begin looking deeper into government in third grade. Teachers bring in guest speakers from the community to share with students the importance of government, law, and history. In fifth grade students take a field trip to state capital, Tallahassee where they are able to ask comprehensive questions, experience government first hand, and participate in meaningful discussion.

## **2. Other Curriculum Areas:**

As a magnet school our students are offered other learning opportunities outside of the core curriculum. Our students in second through fifth grade visit every special area once a week for 50 minutes including: art, music, computer, and science lab. Students in these grades also participate in physical education three times a week for 50 minutes a total of 150 minutes. Students in kindergarten and first grade attend all of the above curriculum areas and library for 30 minutes once a week. These students also attend physical education five days a week, 30 minutes a day for a total of 150 minutes.

In the computer lab, students use Apple computers to enhance their understanding of technology as it relates to coding, web design, programming, media production, and keyboarding. Students in primary grades start by learning the basics of keyboarding and parts of the computer. In the upper grades students continue to practice these skills and master various challenges. Students also practice coding and programming utilizing the robots, “Dash and Dot.” Students start by learning what coding looks like, how to code, and use these codes to program their robots. By fourth and fifth grade students are able to create obstacles and challenges for their robots. All of our students have access to computers in the classroom where they use these skills to create PowerPoints to teach their peers or share information with different stakeholders, to learn and grow through research, and create media productions. In the primary grades, the media productions are typically done as a class; by fourth and fifth grade, students are able to work as a group to create their own media production videos and submit to the Jim Harbin Student Media Festival.

In Music, students learn how to read music, keep a beat, sing solos and sing as a group, as well as play instruments. Music is progressively learned starting in Kindergarten by learning basic music notes and by fifth grade being able to read music. All students in fourth and fifth grade are able to play recorders and try-out for our school choir, Panther Sound, where they participate in school and community concerts.

In Art class students learn basic art concepts and show mastery of these concepts through creating art work. Students pride themselves on creating art that can be displayed throughout the community and school. All students are given opportunities to enter in school, district, and state art competitions. Over the last three years Dr. N.H. Jones has had many student art winners.

In Physical Education (PE), our students participate in several sporting, health, and fitness related activities. Teachers strive to create lessons that teach the standards and offer students the chance to learn the fundamentals of most sports. Students learn positions, terminology, and health related benefits of particular activities. Students learn about the human body and how to keep themselves safe during various activities. Activities include but are not limited to: baseball, soccer, football, track and field activities, archery, jump rope, golf, basketball, and volleyball. Once a week students are also invited to participate in a running program called Morning Milers Club before school which allows students the opportunity to start their day with exercise.

This year our students have also had the opportunity to explore the Makerspace lab where learning is endless with a 3D printer. Students and teachers utilize this lab to enrich various Florida Standards. Students are able to create different models by applying what they have learned. Students use the design process when working in the lab: identify the problem, research and problem solve, build, test, and improve. Teachers have the ability to provide students with enrichment opportunities during Makerspace time. Teachers sign up to bring their students to the Makerspace lab at least once a month.

Morning and afternoon clubs are also provided to support the Florida Standards and provide students additional academic support and enrichment outside of the regular school day. Students have the opportunity to participate in the following clubs: Art Club, Music Club, Science Lab Club, Health Club, and Coding Club.

## **3. Instructional Methods, Interventions, and Assessments:**

Many factors positively affect the diverse and individual needs of the students here at Dr. N.H. Jones. In order for our teachers to meet the needs of all our students, they concentrate specifically on an effective tier

1 core instruction. Quality learning experiences demand teachers to think about higher level teaching techniques. To maximize the impact on student learning, our teachers uphold the principles of visible learning. Both teachers and students work to be clear about learning outcomes based on the standards. Mental modeling with scaffolds paint a picture of the process and end result. Students learn from each other while participating in focused discussions, using Cooperative Learning Kagan Structures, and shared inquiry while teachers facilitate. Our teachers provide students with clear and specific feedback about their learning, referring to examples, asking open-ended questions, and taking anecdotal notes. Students participate by understanding their areas of growth and needs and the next steps to take in the learning process. To help ensure mastery of content and successful learning goals, teachers utilize different forms of formative assessments, including the use of technology. Some programs include PLICKERS and KAHOOT, these programs allow teachers to integrate technology while checking for student understanding.

By being self-directed and given time to reflect along the way, our students become increasingly more aware of their learning outcome. Our teachers utilize Learning Target and Performance Scales to help promote successful learning. Believing that students need to take ownership of their learning, teachers create student profiles, which is essential for teachers to determine the student's learning preferences.

Creating a successful "Growth Mindset" classroom is the goal of all our teachers. This powerful research illustrates how important it is to allow students to be risk takers, make mistakes, and grapple with meaningful tasks. By designing intentional, purposeful, rigorous, and differentiated lessons, based on Florida Standards, students at Dr. N.H. Jones learn through flexible grouping, tiered assignments, and cooperative learning with Kagan structures. Through intentional design and delivery, teachers provide ample time for students to use a plethora of learning strategies. Scaffold lessons enhance student learning in all areas to meet the high expectations of teachers.

District approved summative and benchmark assessments, such as Reading Learning Checks, Math Learning Checks, and AimsWeb are implemented and given to students. By analyzing this assessment data, the Multi-Tier System of Supports (MTSS) Team quickly identifies students who need additional time and support. The team develops a plan which provides students with help as soon as they experience difficulty rather than relying on remediation. Based on the results, students undergo progress monitoring with district approved interventions. To avoid missing core instruction, students remain in the classroom for interventions. Students are provided small group, one on one, and computer-based tutoring opportunities before and after school in both Math and Reading.

Not only does the team recognize struggling students, but also students who exceed mastery and need to be challenged. In our Makerspace room, engaging tasks related to STEAM allow students to problem solve, analyze and synthesize real world problems. Thus, the students become critical thinkers and are able to transfer learned knowledge. Also, in order to maintain high levels of achievement, teachers utilize KidBiz Achieve 3000 as a tool to provide differentiated instruction on the student's individual Lexile Levels.

Every six weeks, teachers meet with the leadership team to analyze student data. At this time teachers collaborate and reflect on specific instructional techniques used in the classroom and make lesson adjustments when appropriate. Sometimes this includes gallery walks of "Best Practices." Assessment data is shared with all stakeholders (students, parents, and staff). Instruction, intervention, and enrichment take precedence in the reflection process. When possible scenarios arise of students not reaching mastery before expectation or perhaps exceeding mastery, a plan is already in place. One being that students are given multiple opportunities in a well-managed learning environment including: whole group learning, small group learning, and 1:1 instruction with frequent interaction and discussion between student to student and teacher to student.

## PART V – SCHOOL SUPPORTS

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### 1. School Climate/Culture:

Dr. N. H. Jones embodies a positive, enriching culture that promotes the academic achievement and social emotional development of all students through various strategies. Through the Character Development Program, Panther Pride Trait of the Month, students learn the ingredients to being a good citizen in society. The spotlighted traits are Trustworthiness, Truthfulness, Thankfulness, Personal Best, Active Listening, Respect, Achievement, and Tolerance. Students that exemplify these traits are chosen monthly and recognized on the Panther Prime morning show. They are also provided a certificate and pencil.

Our Book Bowl, NASA Mars Medical Challenge, and Lego- Robotics clubs serve students from second through fifth grades. Students learn perseverance, hard work, problem solving, and collaboration, while practicing academic and engineering skills.

Students needing more social and emotional support benefit from participation in our Mentoring Program. In this program, each student is partnered with either a school-based or community-based mentor that meets with them monthly to provide additional assistance in any of the following areas: homework help, building confidence, motivation, counseling and guidance.

Our 4th and 5th grade students participate in the junior and senior Safety Patrol Program which provides an opportunity for student empowered leadership. Students within the program meet monthly and participate in student-driven decision-making, such as our newest recognition program, “PAWS”-i-tive Pride. Student Safety Patrols identified kindergarten-fourth grade students demonstrating uniform pride by writing pride reports which enter the students into a drawing for prizes. Safety Patrols greet all students in the morning, assists other students around campus, and run the school’s recycling program.

In order to maintain a school culture where teachers feel valued and supported, our teachers have participated in many team building activities. “The 5 Languages of Appreciative Language in the Workplace” by Gary Chapman and Paul White, and “Mindset: The New Psychology of Success” by Carol S. Dweck are just a couple of faculty and staff book studies that have contributed to our positive school culture. Each study provided opportunities to reflect on current ideas, perspectives, and opened a pathway for empathy and unity. Through partnerships with the Discovery Science Center and our local fire college, school team building activities emerged this year and proved to be successful. The formation of our Safety, Events, Awards and Leadership (SEAL) team built teacher leadership capacity through teacher-driven decision making and input. Grade level collaborations, surveys, and celebratory gatherings are all geared to ensure teacher feedback and hard work is valued and appreciated.

### 2. Engaging Families and Community:

The participation of families and community is encouraged in every classroom, field trip, STEAM activity, and chapter book club that we have. Parents regularly visit classrooms to assist with Accelerated Reading Program, research projects, and presentations. Collectively, we have over 600 volunteers on record that have accumulated almost 9,000 volunteer hours to date.

From partnerships with the University of Florida’s Engineering and European Studies Departments sponsoring STEAM-based field trips for our students, Parent Organization’s dedication to assisting with fundraising activities in support of our curriculum and technology goals such as our Makerspace technology room and our 3-D printer, to our business partners providing assistance in sponsoring activities and events, every effort synergistically benefits the best interest of our students.

Our School Advisory Council (SAC) is made up of parents, teachers, non-instructs, community business partners, and administrators. The SAC meets quarterly to review and provide input on progress towards School Improvement Goals, school policy, and student achievement data. Also, during SAC meetings community speakers present to parents, on topics such as middle school readiness, summer school STEM

enrichment opportunities, and funding for college.

Our students benefit from over 30 STEAM enrichment field trips to locations such as the University of Florida's Engineering Department through various collaborative partnerships; SeaWorld and Tampa Lowery Zoo for in-the-field exposure to science curriculum standards; and the Science Discovery Center for hands on exploratory opportunities. Field Trips to Crystal River, Cross Creek, Silver River Museum, Tallahassee, and our Local County Courthouse infuse our social studies standards and science standards through the exploration of archaeology, geology, civics, and history.

Through the collaboration with the Marion County Emergency Management Department, the addition of our WeatherSTEM Program has opened more doors for student, family, and community engagement. Students are able to use real time weather data for coding, reporting, and forecasting. The community is provided with weather alerts for nearby conditions that notify the community of safety conditions.

Families at Dr. N.H. Jones continue to invest in our community. Our United Way participation has raised over \$10,000 for our community to assist in providing relief for many of our own Marion County students. The addition of our Veteran's "Honor Roll" collected over 350 veteran and service members to highlight during the month of November. Furthermore, our National Elementary Honor Society sponsored a fundraiser that provided stuffed animals and canned food items to needy families. Teaching students about giving back to the community is a top priority at Dr. N.H. Jones.

### **3. Professional Development:**

The participation of the "Mindset" book study for all of the staff supported the belief that our students need to be stretched in their learning. Not only are Dr. N.H. Jones' teachers committed to stretching and growing their student's mind, they continue to strive to grow and stretch their own minds. In order to do this they realize how much teamwork plays a role in their daily lives. Each staff member gave up a Saturday to participate in becoming "Survivors." They worked as a team in many risk-taking challenges at the local Fire College. Being impacted so positively by this event, they wanted their classrooms to reflect this conception as well. Now all of our teachers have been Kagan trained and consistently incorporate the many Kagan structures in their classrooms daily.

In addition to continuous professional development in book studies and instructional technique training, coaching, and modeling, administrators build capacity by having teachers participate in grade level Professional Learning Community (PLC) based on the needs of their students. As in any PLC, teachers draw attention to the following questions: What do we want each student to learn? How will we know when each student has learned it? How will we respond when a student experiences difficulty in learning? Also during the PLCs, administration encourages self-reflection and challenges teacher thinking. The master schedule has been built with collaboration in mind; teachers to share a common planning time, as well as vertically plan with other grade levels.

After learning more about the growth mindset, one of the first shifts embedded in our teachers was to take the focus off of teaching and directly to the student's learning. Today our focus is NOT "what am I going to teach today," but rather "what are the students going to learn today?" Being a magnet school, enrichment plays a major role in the student's routine. Designing systematic strategies to ensure all our students are learning is the goal of the Professional Learning Community.

Over the past year specific training on effective unit planning and lesson planning was initiated by the district and further explored at the school. With the help of the Professional Development Specialist and administration, teachers understand and employ Hess' Cognitive Rigor Matrix and Marzano's Taxonomy of Educational Objectives. Currently, several teachers are learning how to utilize Learning Targets and Performance Scales. Using the performance scale, teachers are able to identify the level of cognitive processing they want to engage and select the proper instructional technique to implement.

#### **4. School Leadership:**

The role of the leadership team (principal, assistant principal, professional development specialist, and guidance counselor) is to collaborate on ways to enhance student achievement and our STEAM program while having a positive impact on our school and community through serving all stakeholders. The success of Dr. N.H. Jones students' academically and behaviorally is the goal of the leadership team. We determine our success by each individual student's learning gain. Putting students first is at the highest priority level of our leadership team. This philosophy has an impact on our school's success through modeling and doing whatever it takes to ensure that our individual student needs are being met, for example, administration tutor low performing students after school.

The principal's role as the instructional leader is to provide vision and support that motivates all stakeholders to implement new strategies and initiatives, as well as to cultivate other leaders. The principal is responsible for data analysis and helping the school stakeholders develop goals to address areas of need. The principal also oversees the financial budgets to ensure all resources meeting individual student needs have been purchased, such as extra resources that support lower performing students master the Florida Standards (I-Ready Reading & Math Program for struggling students). Both the principal and assistant principal build teachers' capacity through reflective feedback of instructional practices and having strategic conversations.

The assistant principal is responsible for overseeing student curriculum needs, building the master schedule with the collaboration of the teachers, and overseeing the fidelity of the Multi-tier Systems of Support (MTSS). The assistant principal, teacher, and the professional development specialist work together to target students needing Tier 2 and Tier 3 interventions.

The professional development specialist models best practices for instructional delivery and follows up with the teacher to provide a 360 coaching experience. The professional development specialist also delivers professional development to teachers based on student performance data.

The guidance counselor ensures that if students need physical support such as glasses, counseling, uniforms, food, etc., that services are provided. The guidance counselor supports the teacher during conferences, Gifted Education Plan Meetings, initial staffings, Individual Education Plan meeting. Furthermore, the guidance counselor oversees that underrepresented gifted students and students in need of other ESE services are identified and served. Families are provided the necessary tools for their child to be successful at school, such as school supplies, an alarm clock, jackets in the winter, etc.

## **Part VI – STRATEGIES FOR ACADEMIC SUCCESS**

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Carol Dweck, author of “Mindset,” introduces the powerful word of “YET” and describes the life changing role it can play in a school. After implementing this book study, stakeholders at Dr. N.H. Jones ventured to raise academic success and apply the “not yet” theory. Teachers began creating achieving environments by seeing learning through the eyes of their students. Students are encouraged to keep trying when the curriculum gets tough and are comfortable taking risks.

To promote a springboard for growth mindset, teachers build “productive” challenges in the classroom, allowing students to see challenges as opportunities to grow. By redirecting focus to the process and not the product and praising effort instead of ability, students are encouraged to take more risks. Our students are able to think outside of the box when working on science projects or engineering activities because they know it's ok to stumble when they are learning. Applying the “not yet” theory also means mistakes are not viewed negatively, instead they are viewed as an opportunity for growth.

Growth mindset has been shared during School Advisory Council meetings, Parent Organization meetings, and parent teacher conferences. All staff members and parents are encouraged to ask questions that promote a growth mindset, such as, “What were your challenges today and how did you overcome them?” Parents are also encouraged to set goals with their children and monitor the progress. Students are also expected to monitor their own progress and take ownership of their learning. Teachers model a positive and encouraging attitude when talking, supporting, and engaging all of their students and families.

Teachers, parents, the leadership team, as well as students, constantly monitor achievement data. Based on the data, interventions or enrichment activities are provided with fidelity to students as needed. If an instructional practice isn't successful, the mindset is to try a new strategy, until the student outcome is achieved.

When students feel safe to take more risks and begin to generate a connection of what they learn and how it is relevant to their lives, the desired student outcome can be achieved. Our teachers continue to learn to paint the “bigger” picture for students, so that each student is able to see the purpose and joy in their unique learning journey. Developing lifelong learners is the principle strategy to promote success at Dr. N.H. Jones. Dedication, persistence, and innovation fuels continual progression at Dr. N.H. Jones.